# PICTVRES BY GEORGE FRED ERICK WATTS

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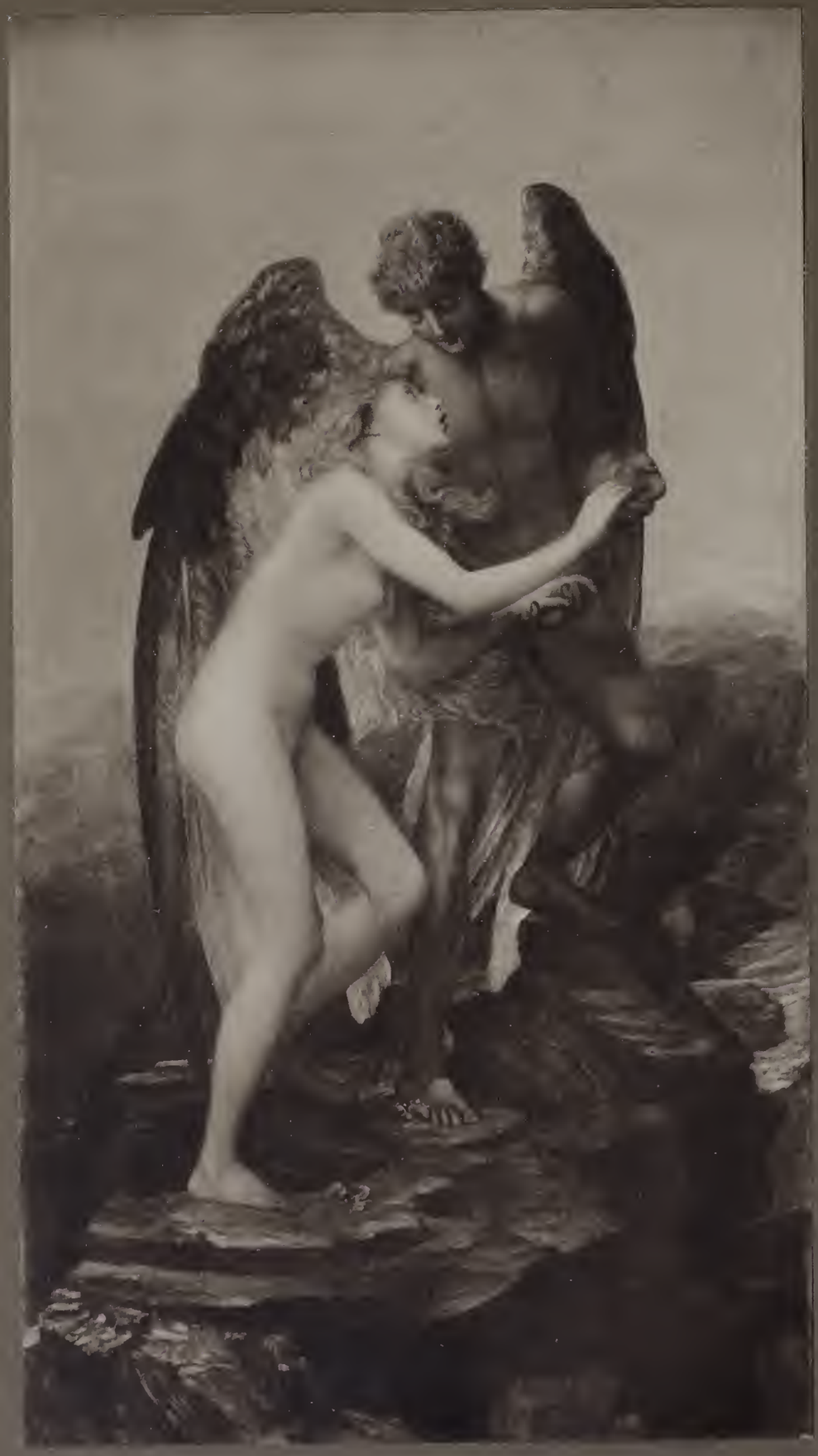

# PICTURES BY GEORGE FREDERICK WATTS

Introduction and Selections
by Julia Ellsworth Ford
and Thomas W. Lamont

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# LOVE AND LIFE

LOVE came by, and having known her
In a dream of fabled lands,
Gently stooped, and laid upon her
Mystic chrism of holy hands;

So, when Life looked upward, being
Warmed and breathed on from above,
What sight could she have for seeing,
Evermore . . . but only Love?

# INTRODUCTION

## Some Aspects of Mr. Watts' Paintings

"When a man is born with a profound moral sentiment, preferring truth, justice, and the serving of all men to any honors or any gain, men readily feel the superiority."—Emerson.

THE place that George Frederick Watts holds among the great painters of the ancient and modern world is each day growing more secure. It is not too much to say that he is, at this dawning of the twentieth century, among the foremost of England's artists, and one whose work is destined to endure. His high rank rests not alone upon his technical skill, nor upon his immense range of subjects, nor upon his superb handling of colors. It rests chiefly upon his exalted imagination, and upon the impression in his pictures of the highest thoughts of the human spirit. His is a master mind. Watts is not simply a painter; he is a teacher—a prophet, if you like—one of far-sighted vision, and without dogma of creed.

Mr. Watts' art represents no one section of the English school. The time was ripe for a revolt from hollow traditions, as expressed in the work of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, and Mr. Watts, though not, properly speaking, a leader of revolt, was an exponent of the spirit of the time. He was not a preraphaelite, but a forerunner of the preraphaelites, the first English painter to break boldly away from old traditions of art, in which genuine feeling was stifled and smothered. The preraphaelites, on the other hand, were not disciples of Mr. Watts, though they felt an impulse like unto his. The movement was as inevitable as is the evolution of individual or nation.

George Frederick Watts was born February 23, 1817, in London, his parents being of Celtic origin. He decided when still very young to devote his life to art, and at the age of twenty, in 1837, he exhibited his first picture at the Academy. Five years later he won a prize of three hundred pounds, and with these funds was enabled to realize his plan of visiting Paris, the stepping-stone to Italy, which was to become the scene of his chief inspiration, and the best of his early work.

Lord Holland, at that time British Ambassador at Florence, gave a hearty welcome to Watts, and proved so good a friend and so generous a patron that the young painter was able to stay there four years, painting portraits of Lord and Lady Holland, and many of their distinguished guests. The effect of such encouragement and help at the outset of his career was invaluable. His long cherished dream of seeing Italy was taking shape beyond his hopes, surrounded, as he was, by the richest Italian influences and atmosphere, now at Lord Holland's Florentine house, Casa Ferroni; now at his villa of Coreggi, famous in the history of the Medici. It was during this golden period of his Italian visit that his ideas became so impregnated with the Venetian coloring that grew later to be an integral part of his art and of himself. Watts was always self-taught, independent of human teachers. His real teachers, as he has often said, were the Elgin marbles, the source of the inspiration in many of his pictures—such as the graceful and pathetic "Ariadne" with the two leopards. The drapery in his well-known "Hope," and in the "Bacchanal," suggests the same influence.

Mr. Watts, in truth, began his career with ideas and standards into which material considerations never entered. This fact is apparent in his method of work, in his paintings, and in the man himself. His own personality was singularly striking, yet simple, and he had the devotion of all who knew him. His own words give a

good idea of his serious aim in art: "The fine arts are only to be exercised in a solemn manner, and for conspicuously serious purposes. All that is beautiful and graceful appertains to poetry, art and music, and will overlap lines of limitation; they cannot be restricted in their utterances; at their noblest, they are aids to what is highest in man's nature, but below this exalted range they may well be exercised to cheer or simply to amuse."

So serious were Mr. Watts' purposes and aims that it is impossible, in any appreciation of his work, to approach it in any but a serious way. And that aspect of his work which is ever fresh and vigorous, and which is daily compelling a wider admiration, is the new religion, as it might be called, of Love and Life; new, that is, as applied to imaginative work in art. The painters of the early Christian era were religious in thought and largely symbolic. But in their time symbolism was of a crude and simple kind; the cross, the dove, the lamb, stood with them for exact

ROBERT BROWNING.

spiritual equivalents. Mr. Watts' work is of a different order. He has usually avoided traditional symbols. As Mr. William Butler Yeats truly says, "True art is expressive and symbolic, and makes every form, every sound, every color, every gesture, a signature of some unanalyzable imaginative essence. False art is not expressive, but mimetic." Watts was a true artist, both poet and teacher, and rendered into imaginative form the most exalted human love—the clearest vision of human life. The eternal truths which he paints are of the same sort as the ideas that come to us in modern poetry, especially from Browning and Whitman; while Emerson, too, had this same religious idea of Love and Life. Lines and motives from these poets live anew for us as we gaze at Mr. Watts' work.

Religion and art are so closely connected that a review of the development of great art would seem also to be

a record of past spiritual expression. The ancient nations are best known to us through the enduring monuments of their art, but these concrete expressions are also the outward and visible signs of great spiritual yearnings. As the masterpieces of Greek art were the outcome of religion, as Pallas Athene was sacred to Phidias, as the Madonna was worshipped by early Italian painters, so is the Christ in man reverenced by this great modern artist. He paints the spirit of Christ in man and woman. Mr. Claude Phillips singles him out as one of the "exponents of the human-divine in humanity as it is." And it is worthy of note that Mr. Watts' are the only easel paintings which to our knowledge are hung in Protestant churches.

"Love Triumphant" and "Love and Life" are the two symbolic paintings which best illustrate Mr. Watts' idea that Love is the principle of life and of true religion. Emerson also felt this when he said: "We learn

JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY.

nothing rightly until we learn the symbolic character of Life." "Love and Life," Mr. Watts admits, is his favorite creation. As he says: "I have expressed my idea perhaps best in this picture, because the meaning is of the simplest; that love—by which, of course, I mean not physical passion, but altruism, tenderness—leads to the highest life."

Some one has said that only he who knows Life can hope to comprehend Death. This is a truth wisely spoken, and applies with perfect force to Watts. For, as in his remarkable portraits, he shows his knowledge of the inner man and of Life, so in his imaginative pictures has he developed that same wondrously comprehensive thought of Death. He has depicted Death in many forms, and his conception of it is noble and comforting. Death is not the dread reaper—the cruel invader. With Watts, Death is the great comforter—the tender con-

soler, and the bearer of solace and rest. He would have us believe that Death comes to heal the wounded and broken life—to make it whole and bring it to completion. What stricken mother can fail to read comfort for her grief in "Death Crowning Innocence," a picture full of the tenderest feeling? Death is depicted as a sweet-faced woman, cherishing in her lap and arms Innocence, a sleeping infant, and gently placing upon its brow the crown that brings surcease to the cares and pains of the world.

As an American, I had so long admired Mr. Watts' paintings, that I felt it a great privilege to meet and talk with him at his London home. This and his picture gallery—"Little Holland House"—are in West Kensington, opposite the celebrated Holland House, the home of his earliest patron. One enters first into a gallery hung with many pictures, some hundred and fifty in all, and passing among these gains a spacious hall with a winding staircase. Opposite is a large leaded window reaching from the ceiling to the window-seat; the whole color effect being green, reflecting the green trees and grass outside. On the day of my visit, the softened light of a September London haze streamed through this window. At the top of the staircase the maid opened the door of the studio—a large, light room; and in the center stood Mr. Watts—delicate, erect, for such an elderly man. Taking a few steps forward, he bowed in the most courtly manner. His hair, moustache, and short beard were very white. His face was finely cut, and strong in outline, with eyes of clear blue-gray. He wore his now familiar cap of brown velvet. A soft jacket hung loosely from his shoulders, narrowly disclosing a brown waistcoat, figured in sombre yellow.

After our greetings were over, I mentioned that all Americans owed Mr. Watts a debt of gratitude for the portraits that he had given to the world, and that we were especially glad and obliged for his Browning, Rossetti, Morris, Meredith, and Motley. "Motley," repeated Mr. Watts. "Oh, yes, you would be interested in him; he was a compatriot of yours, and a good writer." I answered that we were bold enough to claim the others, too, as compatriots.

"Why not?" said he. "We are all of one family. It was through the interest and persuasion of an American woman that I first sent my pictures to America."

In 1885 Mr. Watts' pictures had been exhibited in New York at the Metropolitan Museum. During the six months of the exhibition, over half a million persons visited the gallery, and an urgent request was made to allow the pictures to remain another six months. In talking with Mr. Watts of this American exhibition, I spoke particularly of "Love and Death." He seemed interested in this, and said: "Probably that is my most popular painting."

Among all the paintings grouped on the walls, one—then not quite finished, but since widely known—stood out prominently—"Love Triumphant." Mr. Watts interpreted with marked interest the symbolic meaning of this picture. Two prostrate forms—male and female—lay in the foreground. The background represented a great stretch of dismal, dreary waste. Rising above the two figures, and occupying the greater part of the picture, was a partly nude male figure, with uplifted hands and outspread wings. Pointing to the two recumbent figures, Mr. Watts said: "These two, Life and Death—the mother, perhaps, of new life—have traveled through the ages together. Life has known all experiences; the dreary waste, the dead level of the desert, is past. The end of the struggle is here—but Love still lives."

It was stirring, indeed, to gaze with the painter himself at this radiant, soaring, deathless figure of Love—strongly mounting, conquering, triumphant!

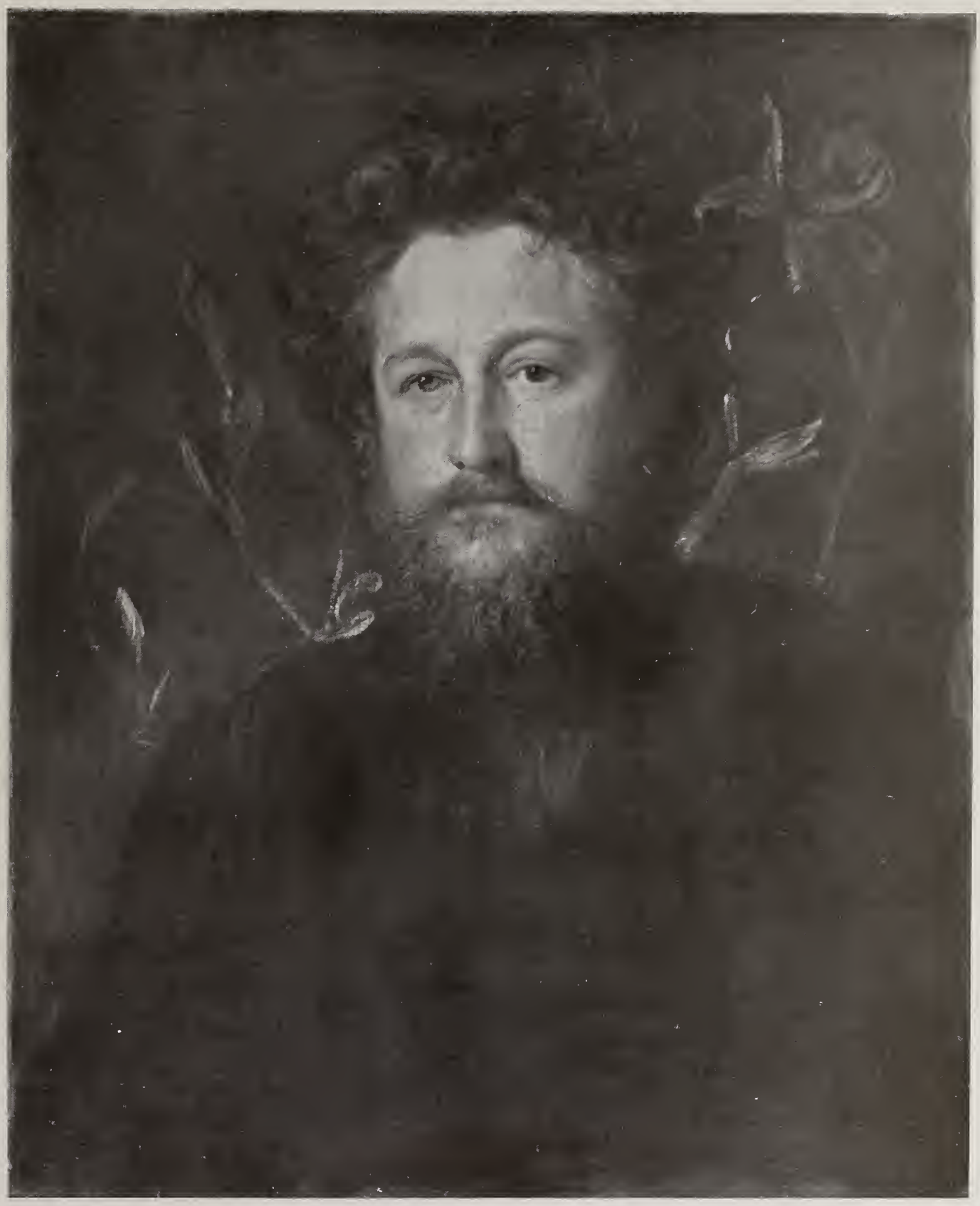
There was a picture near the window upon which Mr. Watts was evidently working before I entered; another was on an easel in front of me; all the walls were covered with paintings. In making some reference to these pictures, I asked Mr. Watts if he knew Walt Whitman, for it seemed to me that each in his own way—the painter and the poet—had been working out similar conceptions.

"You have painted Death in your pictures as Whitman describes it in his books," I said, and quoted:

> "Dark mother, always gliding near, with soft feet,
> Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest welcome?"

To this Mr. Watts replied: "I don't know Whitman's works well—I know the spirit of the man. He was one who bravely threw away all tradition and defied custom. Not many of us can do it; unconsciously we follow the steps of our predecessors. I have tried," he went on, "to portray Death not as terrifying; it should not be frightful." Then he stopped, and pointing to his picture of "Death on the White Horse," said: "Death comes in many ways," as if to imply that this was an exception to his usual ideas of Death.

"But," he added, "I think of Death as a kind nurse; that is why I painted Death as a woman in 'Love and Death,' Death almost overshadowing Love, but not quite—they are inseparable."



WILLIAM MORRIS.

We looked at the pictures a few moments more without speaking, and then I turned to say good-by. I recall Mr. Watts' prophetic words in parting: "England is the greatest country for art just now," he said. "America will be the next great nation in art in the time that is to come."

Mr. Watts shook hands gently, letting his fingers rest for a moment on my arm, and saying: "Give my love to America." I turned to take a last look of him as I left the studio. He had his brush in one hand, his palette in the other—already absorbed in his work.

To some natures, Watts' purely imaginative pictures seem too subtle and obscure; and by such admirers of his talent it is certain that his portraits will be regarded as his soundest and most admirable work. To quote Claude Phillips again: "No master of the century has painted so great a gallery of portraits, has created and interpreted anew for the world so many noble men and gracious women, as Watts; and I venture to say this, bearing in mind the achievements of David, Ingres, Franz Von Lenbach, Elie-Delaunay, Bonnat, John Everett Millais, and J. S. Sargent. Physical vitality—the actual moment of being, of volition—these things have been much better represented by others. But the entire man—his past, present, and future, enveloped by the painter in the glow of brotherly love and sympathy—this thing has never been given in art since the great Venetian painter in the sixteenth century, since Rembrandt painted in the seventeenth."

These portraits by Mr. Watts include a long list of England's statesmen, poets, artists, and men of letters, with now and then a face of another nationality. One never remarks the epoch nor the dress, nor the pose. What one has learned to seek, and never fails to find, is the inner character of the subject, showing through the canvas and colors. Mr. Watts seems to have been born with the keen intuition to see and read deep into a man's soul; to lift the mask from off the face, and show forth upon it the real character of the man himself. As some one, writing of Mr. Watts' portraits, has said, "He does not copy men—he re-creates them."

Most wonderful are the eyes in these portraits. They are different, and in each so clearly the mirror of the mind! Compare the calm, dispassionate eye of John Lothrop Motley, the American historian and statesman, with the eyes of the poet, Swinburne, large and dreamy; or with those of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, filled with earnestness and imagination; or again with those of George Meredith—kindly but subtle, analytical, and peering into the future.

We feel, in looking at the long line of portraits in the National Portrait Gallery, the strong personality of each man, and we know intuitively that the painter has himself known and caught the spirit of each. It is interesting to know of Mr. Watts' own admiration for the portrait of Julius the Second by Raphael: "A portrait is the most truly historical picture," he says, "and this is the most monumental and historical of portraits. The longer one looks at it, the more it demands attention."

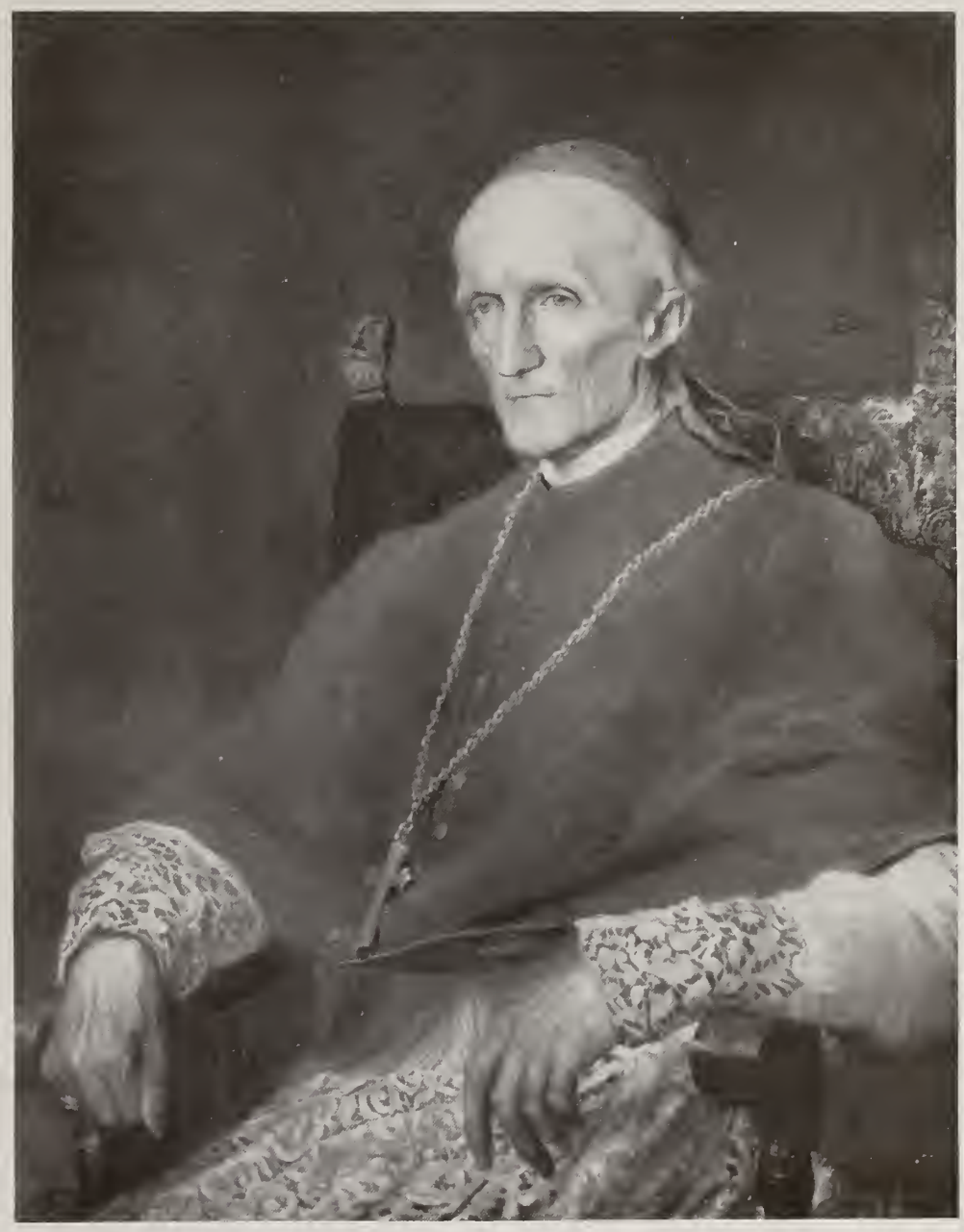
It is important to mention that some of Mr. Watts' best portraits during his early period are to be found in the famous Holland House in London. Many of these are pencil sketches, done by candle-light, of the most interesting members of Florentine society at the time when Mr. Watts was a guest at the British Legation. They include the American Livingstone; Madame de Flahaut, a study remarkable for delicacy of treatment; and Dr. Playfair, the finest in the collection. Among the oils are to be found a portrait of Watts by himself; a charming picture of the child, Miss Mary Fox, afterwards Princess Lichtenstein; also portraits of Guizot, Thiers, and Lucien Bonaparte; and one of Lady Holland, a remarkable piece of work for a painter so young as Watts then was.

I have already mentioned that Mr. Watts had his own and very definite ideas on art. In regard to the aim of art, he says: "No one questions the mission of poetry to elevate and even instruct while delighting, but for want in modern times of association with religious and political life, it has come to be believed, and even asserted, that art should be nothing but a mere ornamental fringe on the social garment—should have no claim to honor beyond what is due to dexterity. I think that there is a tendency nowadays to give undue praise to obvious dexterity, implying thereby that a picture should appear to have been produced without any trouble. Nature never works in this way; and to make it appear that in imitation of her fullness and loveliness no heart-breaking pains have been taken, is to treat her with irreverence to grieve over. An age of competition must be an age of rapid results and brilliant effects; in art striking appeals to the perceptive side of memory, of incidents, and peculiarities, rather than to those influences which require leisure and reflection." Again he says: "Art is in danger of losing its character as a great intellectual utterance; and in working, my efforts have been actuated by a desire to establish correspondence between them and noble poetry and great literature."

He has, indeed, chosen several of his subjects from literature. Among these are "Ophelia," "Paolo and Francesca," "Una and the Knight of the Red Cross," all of which breathe the real spirit of romance. He has taken some subjects from the Bible, and many from the great Greek myths. His "Orpheus and Eurydice" is a poetical and powerful version of the well-known story, treated in a most original manner. Such pictures as "The Building

of the Ark," "The Spirit of Christianity," "The Good Samaritan," "The Death of Abel," "The Birth of Eve," show a marked Italian influence; but they lack that great quality of personality which is the hall-mark of original genius.

In contrast with these pictures, may fairly be placed the "Eve" series. They are exponents of that more refined and delicate use of symbolism which is characteristic of Watts' greater work. The first is called "Creation of Eve." The figure rises toward Heaven. It is meant to represent the type of noble womanhood rejoicing in praise of her creation. The dove, lilies and roses are at her feet. Hidden among the lilies there coils a serpent. The second of the trilogy represents "Eve's Fall." The third and finest of the series is "Eve Repentant." The agony of remorse is perfectly shown in the pose of the figure, although the face is hidden, and even in a photograph



CARDINAL MANNING.

the glorious color of the hair is suggested. This picture of "Eve Repentant," and another called "The Goddesses Three," are good examples of the way in which Watts surrounds his figures with a veiled atmosphere, in which, nevertheless, although the outlines are defined, the colors fall into each other in perfect harmony. This veil adds a mystery and charm to his subject. In matters of technique, Mr. Watts holds that in putting on colors, there should never be anything like smear in painting; and edge, however soft and delicate, should be distinct and clear. After each painting the color should be allowed to dry thoroughly, and not be retouched until it is quite hard.

In regard to working from models directly, Mr. Watts believes that this method is destructive to pure imaginative work. He has endeavored to master the source of the impression of beauty made on him. Mrs. Barrington,

his pupil, says: "He has drawn careful studies in order to find out precisely what particular variation from the ordinary proportion has produced on his mind the effect of uncommon beauty; but he has never inserted an actual imitation of face or form directly into an imaginative work."

Some mention must be made of Mr. Watts' work in sculpture. The best known example is his colossal equestrian statue called "Energy," which for many years could be seen in his garden in London. This figure, like his paintings, is symbolical, but admits of several interpretations. Those who realize best the difficulties of making great equestrian statues have paid due tribute to the sculptor who has succeeded in this arduous task. Mr. Watts has completed also, with equal perseverance, another great equestrian statue, that of Hugh Lupus, the partly mythical ancestor of the Duke of Westminster; a colossal statue of the late Lord Tennyson; a notable recumbent figure for the tomb of Bishop Lonsdale in Lichfield Cathedral; a second recumbent figure of the Marquis of Lothian; a monument to the late Thomas Cholmondelly, Esq. The bust of Clytie is too well known to speak of at length. His bent toward plastic art may be noticed in several of his paintings, especially in "The Rider on the White Horse."

To Watts, breathing deep the spirit of broad humanity, it was a matter of regret that so many pictures are now owned by private collectors and kept in galleries to which the public is not admitted. That his own ideas on such matters were far different is indicated by the fact that he kept many of his originals, and copies of his most celebrated pictures, in his own gallery, to which the public is freely admitted once or twice each week.

His humane interest in the lives of the people was well known; he always showed himself eager to help them, not only with the gifts of money, but by personal devotion. "For he is the rich man in whom the people are rich, and how to give all access to the masterpieces of art and nature is the problem of civilization." The solution of this problem was the earnest purpose of Mr. Watts' life. Characteristic of his generosity were his magnificent gifts of twenty-one pictures to the Tate Gallery of London; of portraits to the National Gallery; a picture to Germany, and one to Italy; and of a replica of "Love and Life" to America for the White House. It is little to say that Watts was a born artist—a genius—with the talent and industry to teach himself. He was that and far more besides; other and greater things lay in his own character. His mind was filled with noble conceptions, and his heart beat high with a message to his fellow-man. He set forth a noble ideal, and he also lived it; he has worked out the passion and power that lay dormant in his soul.

A great character then has been the ground of all his work; it was his good fortune—and the world's—that he was born with the talent of making his message clear, and of proclaiming it in beautiful form. It is true that he was inclined now and then to preach too much, and in his effort to tell his message to all he sometimes chose his topics ill. This criticism may well be applied to paintings like "Minotaur" and "Mammon," ugly and incongruous subjects. But happily these instances are few and inconspicuous, and are, moreover, examples of his whole aim—to paint, as he himself says, "not things—but ideas." Mr. Watts has had to labor hard for his greatness, rising with the sun and laying down his brush only with its setting—even then to be pondering in the twilight new thoughts for the work of the morrow.

In the new Order of Merit which King Edward VII. created at his coronation, Mr. Watts had a conspicuous place. But his fame needs no such token to render it secure; nor could the knighthood and barony which, report declares, were more than once urged upon him in times past, shed new lustre upon his name.

His power rests upon a more enduring basis; and when the remainder of his works are given to the nation, as he wished them to be at his death, that power is bound to be one of increasing force and helpfulness.

"Give honour unto Luke Evangelist;
For he it was (the aged legends say)
Who first taught Art to fold her hands and pray.
Scarcely at once she dared to rend the mist
Of devious symbols; but soon having wist
How sky—breadth and field—silence and this day
Are symbols also in some deeper way,
She looked through these to God and was God's priest."

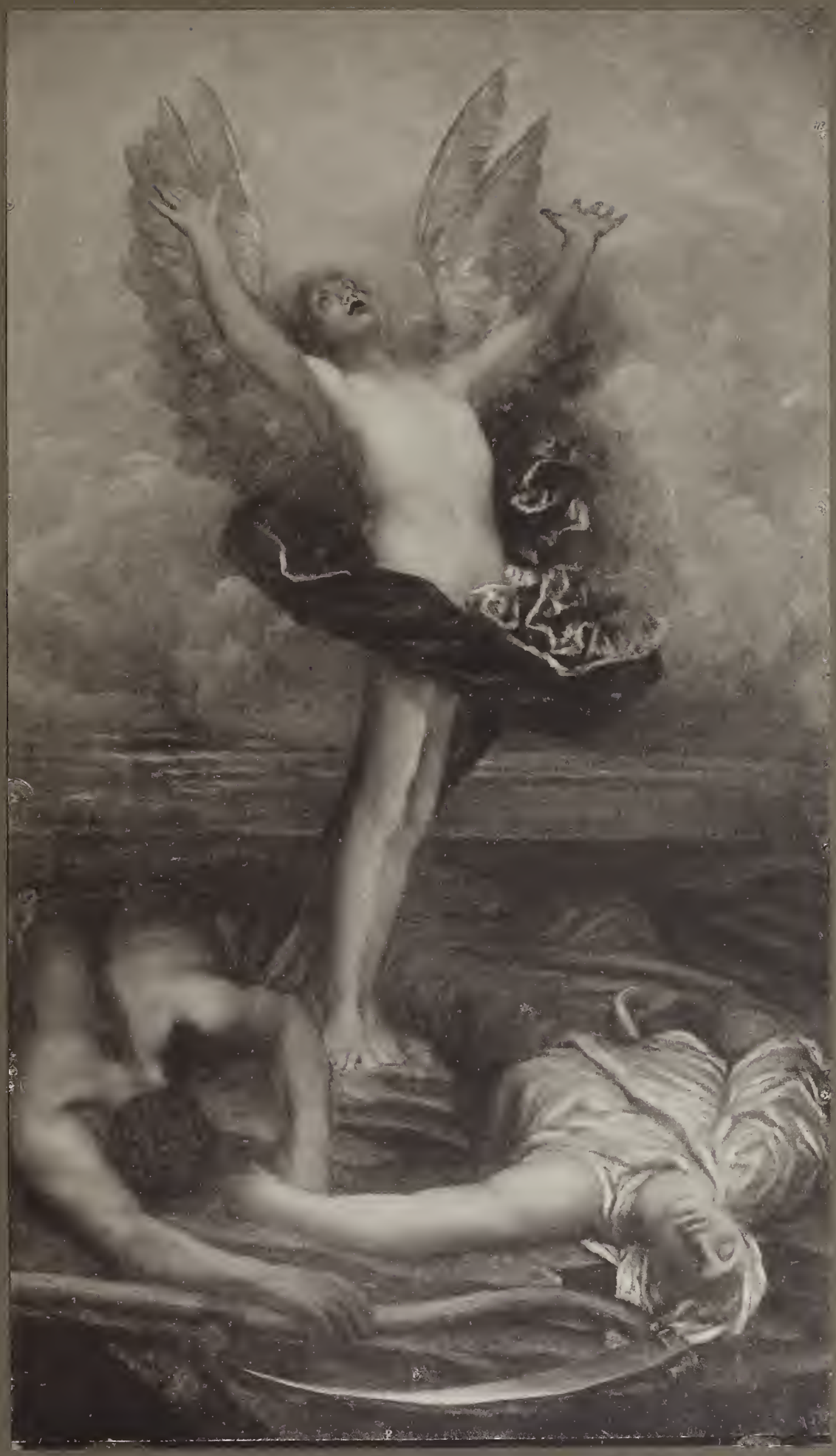
# LOVE TRIUMPHANT

SWINBURNE

# LOVE TRIUMPHANT

I AM that which began;
Out of me the years roll;
Out of me God and man;
I am equal and whole;
God changes, and man and them bodily; I am the Soul.

I am in thee to save thee,
As my soul in thee saith;
Give thou as I gave thee,
Thy Life-blood and breath;
Green leaves of thy labour, white flowers of thy thought,
and red fruit of thy death.

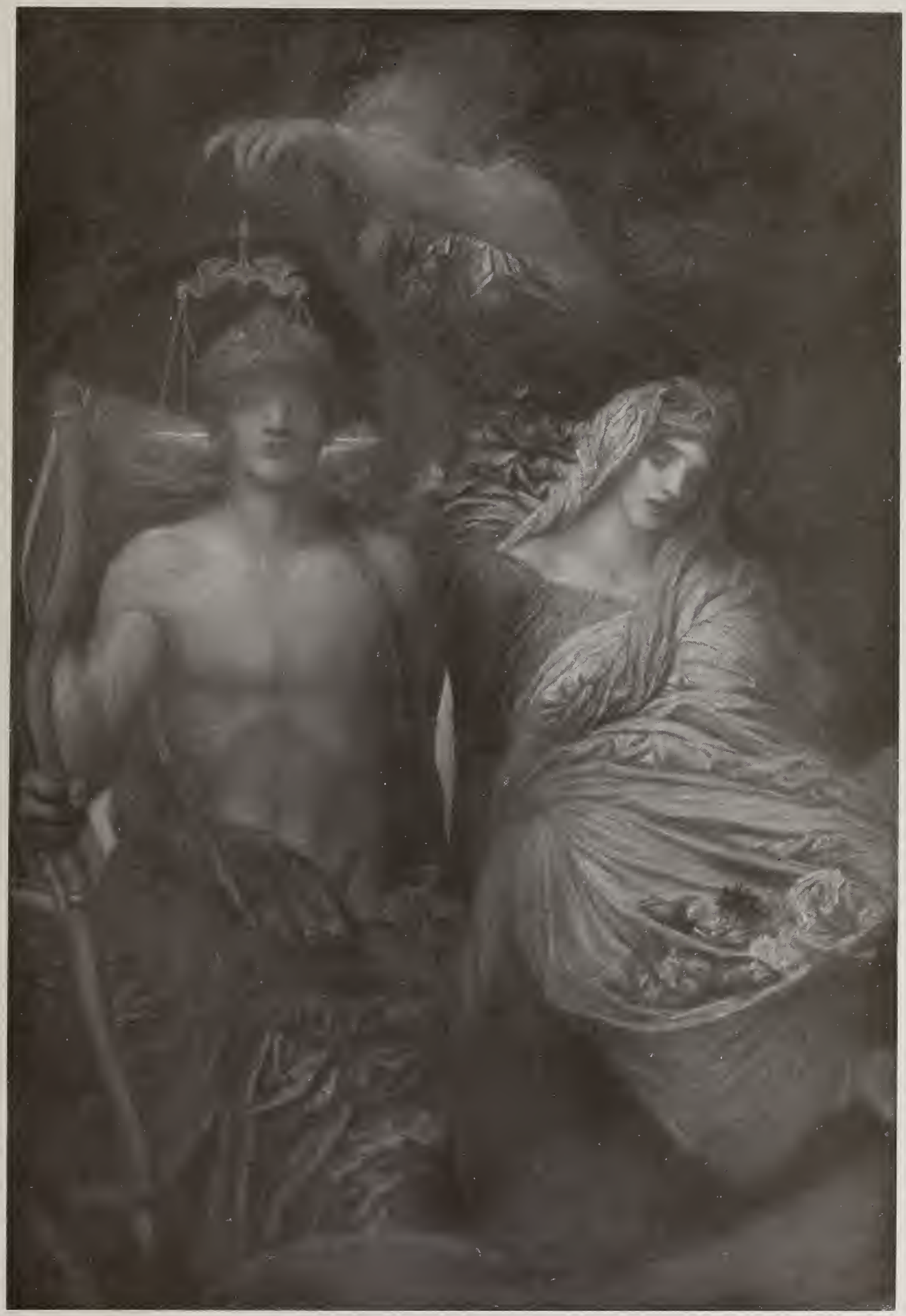


# TIME, DEATH AND JUDGMENT

ECCLESIASTES

# TIME, DEATH AND JUDGMENT

"WHATSOEVER thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."



# UNA AND THE RED CROSS KNIGHT

Edmund Spenser

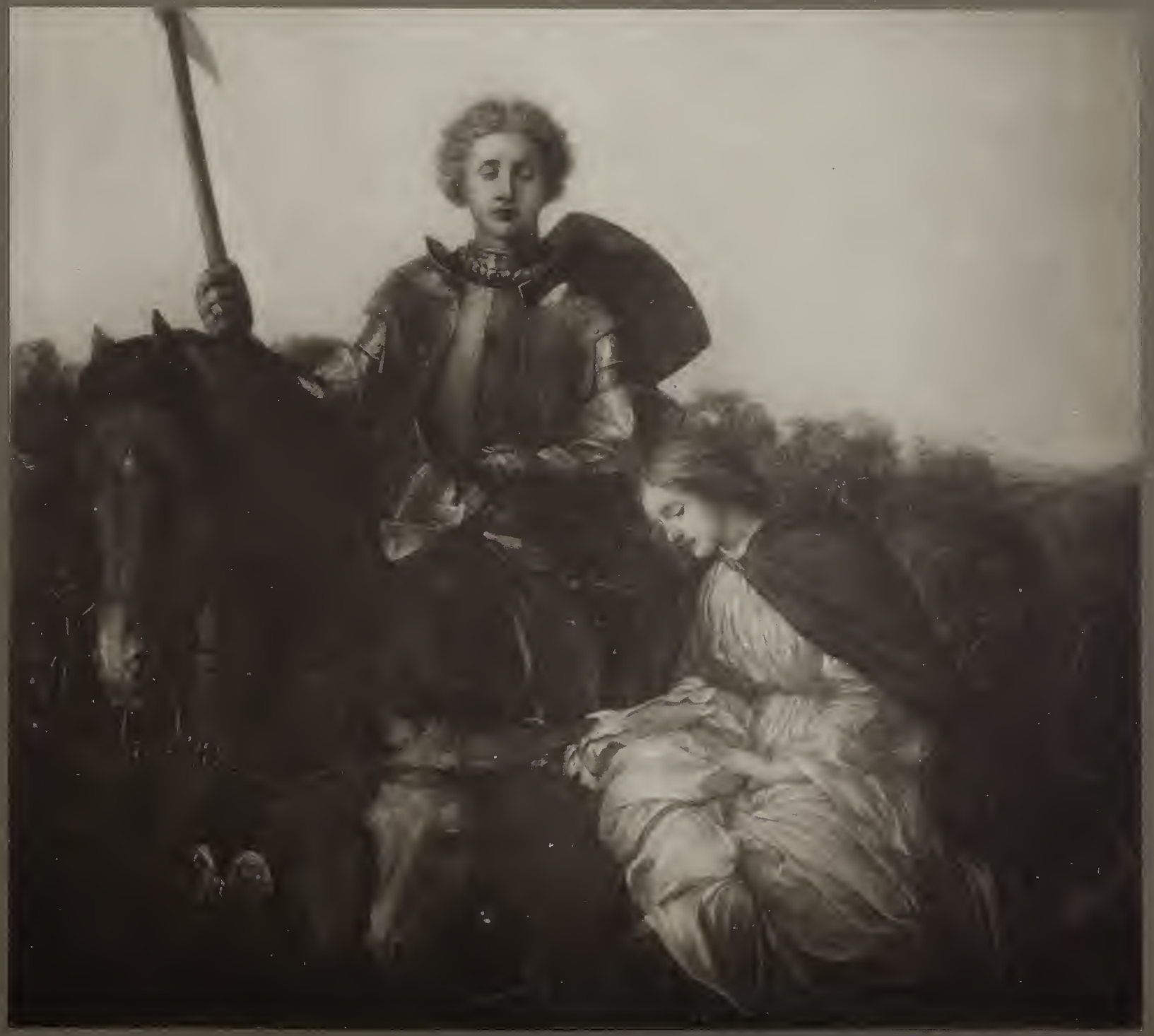
# UNA AND THE RED CROSS KNIGHT

A GENTLE Knight was pricking on the plaine,
Ycladd en mightie armes and silver shielde,
Wherein old dints of deepe woundes did remaine,
The cruell markes of many a bloody fielde;
Yet armes till that time did he never wield.
His angry steede did chide his foming bitt,
As much disdayning to the curbe to yield:
Full jolly knight he seemd, and faire did sitt,
As one for knightly giusts and fierce encounters fitt.

And on his brest a bloodie Crosse he bore,
The deare remembrance of his dying Lord,
For whose sweete sake that glorious badge he wore,
And dead, as living, ever him ador'd:
Upon his shield the like was also scor'd,
For soveraine hope which in his helpe he had.
Right faithfull true he was in deede and word;
But of his cheere did seeme too solemne sad;
Yet nothing did he dread, but ever was ydrad.

* * * * * * * *

A lovely Ladie rode him faire beside,
Upon a lowly asse more white then snow,
Yet she much whiter; but the same did hide
Under a vele, that wimpled was full low;
And over all a blacke stole shee did throw:
As one that inly mournd, so was she sad,
And heavie sate upon her palfrey slow;
Seemed in heart some hidden care she had,
And by her, in a line, a milkewhite lambe she lad.



# LOVE AND DEATH

MARGARET DELAND

# LOVE AND DEATH

ALAS! that man must see
Love, before Death!
Else they content might be
With their short breath:
Aye glad when the pale sun
Showed restless Day was done,
And endless Rest begun!

Glad when with strong, cool hand
Death clasped their own,
And with a strange command
Hushed every moan:
Glad to have finished pain,
And labor wrought in vain,
Blurred by Sin's deepening stain.

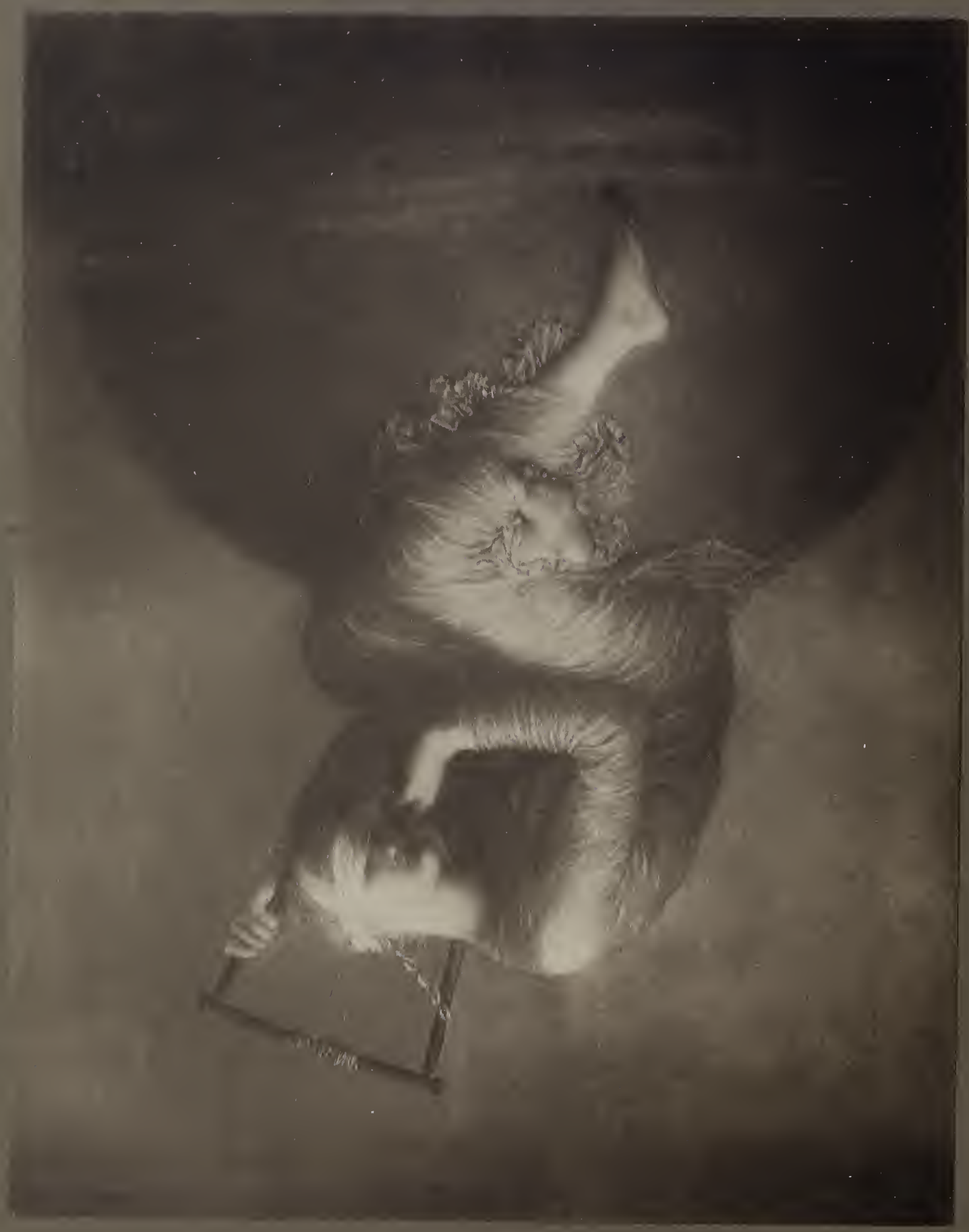
But Love's insistent voice
Bids self to flee:—
"Live that I may rejoice;
Live on for me!"
So, for Love's cruel mind,
Men fear this Rest to find,
Nor know great Death is kind!

# HOPE

SHELLEY

# HOPE

TO suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
To defy power which seems omnipotent;
To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
This * * * * * is to be
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory!

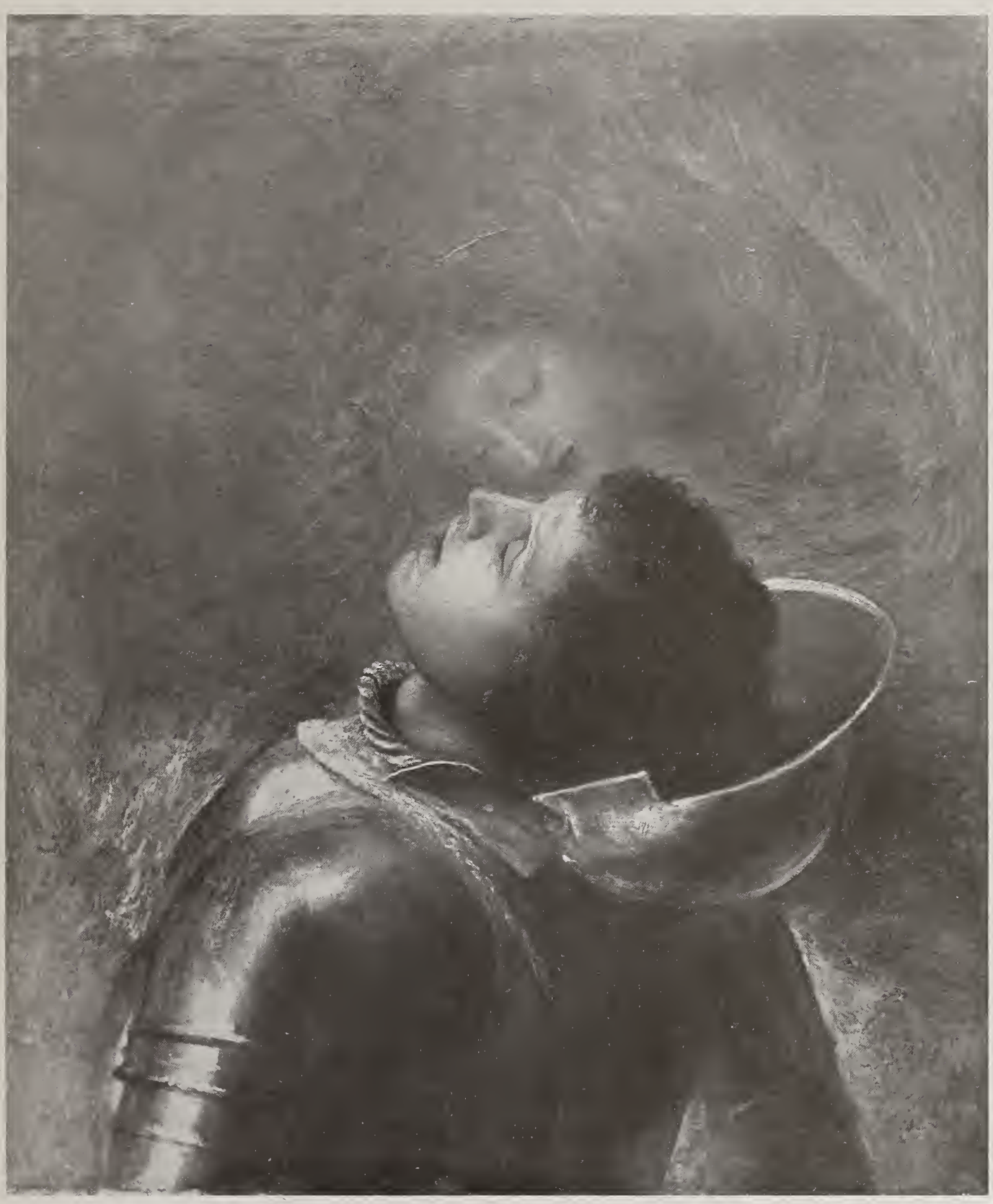


# THE HAPPY WARRIOR

BROWNING

# THE HAPPY WARRIOR

I WAS ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes and forbore,
And bade me creep past.
No! Let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers,
The heroes of old.
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
Of pain, darkness and cold,
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute's at end,
And the elements rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest!

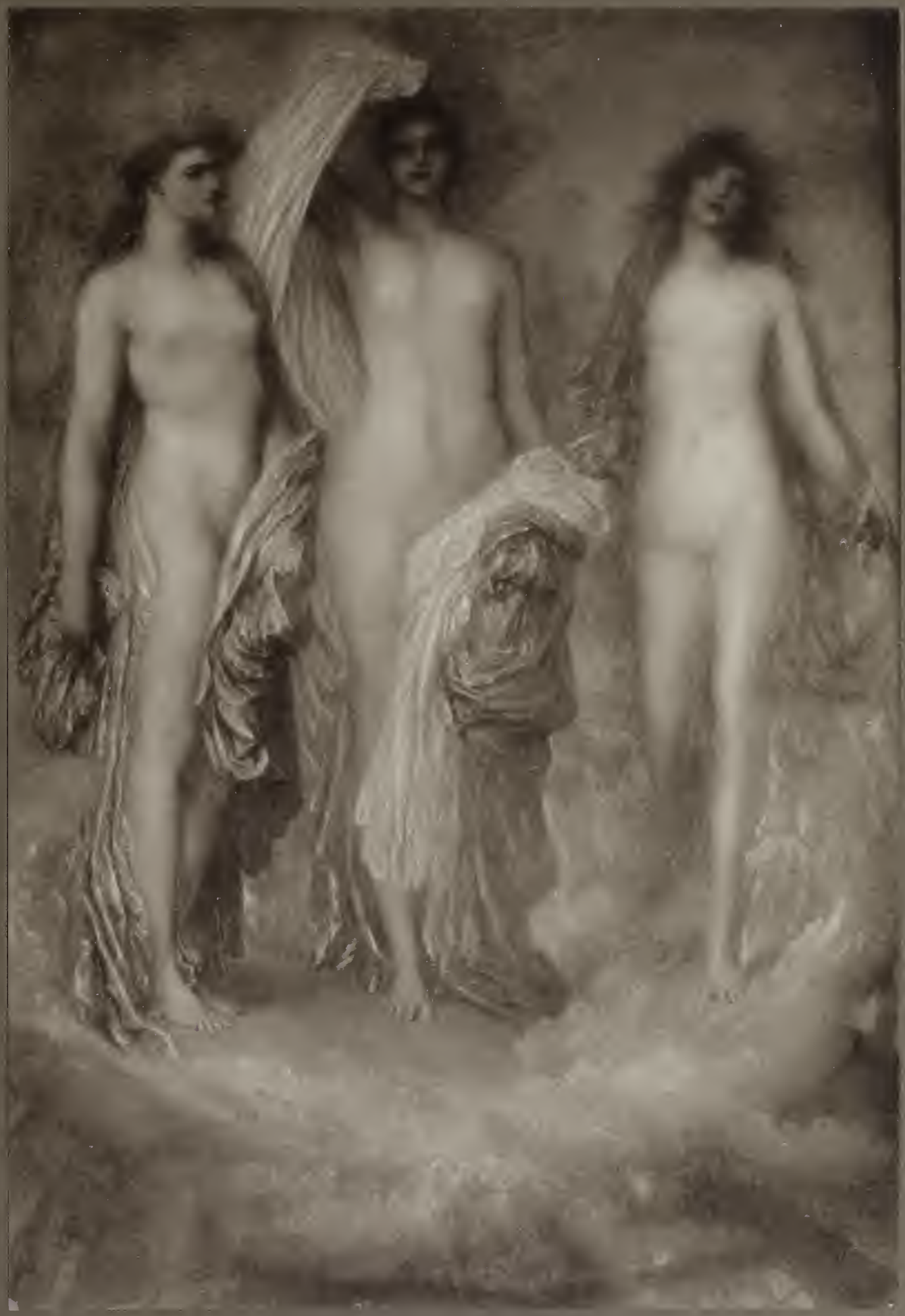


# THE THREE GODDESSES

TENNYSON

# THE THREE GODDESSES

IT was the deep midnoon; one silvery cloud
Had lost his way between the piny sides
Of this long glen. Then to the bower they came,
Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower,
And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,
Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,
Lotos and lilies; and a wind arose,
And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,
This way and that, in many a wild festoon
Ran riot, garlanding the gnarlèd boughs
With bunch and berry and flower thro' and thro'.

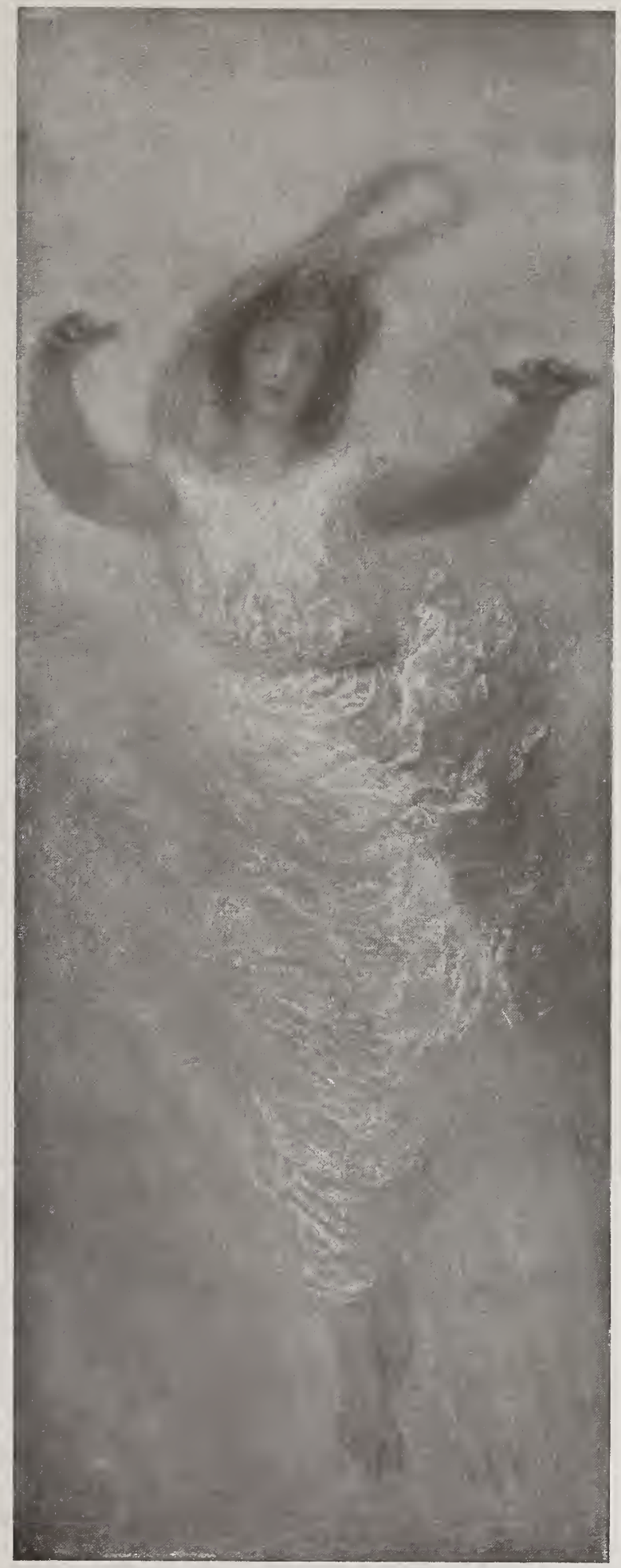


# IRIS

FLACCUS

# IRIS

"LIKE fiery clouds, that flush with ruddy glare,
Or Iris, gliding through the purple air;
When loosely girt her dazzling mantle flows,
And 'gainst the sun in arching colors glow."

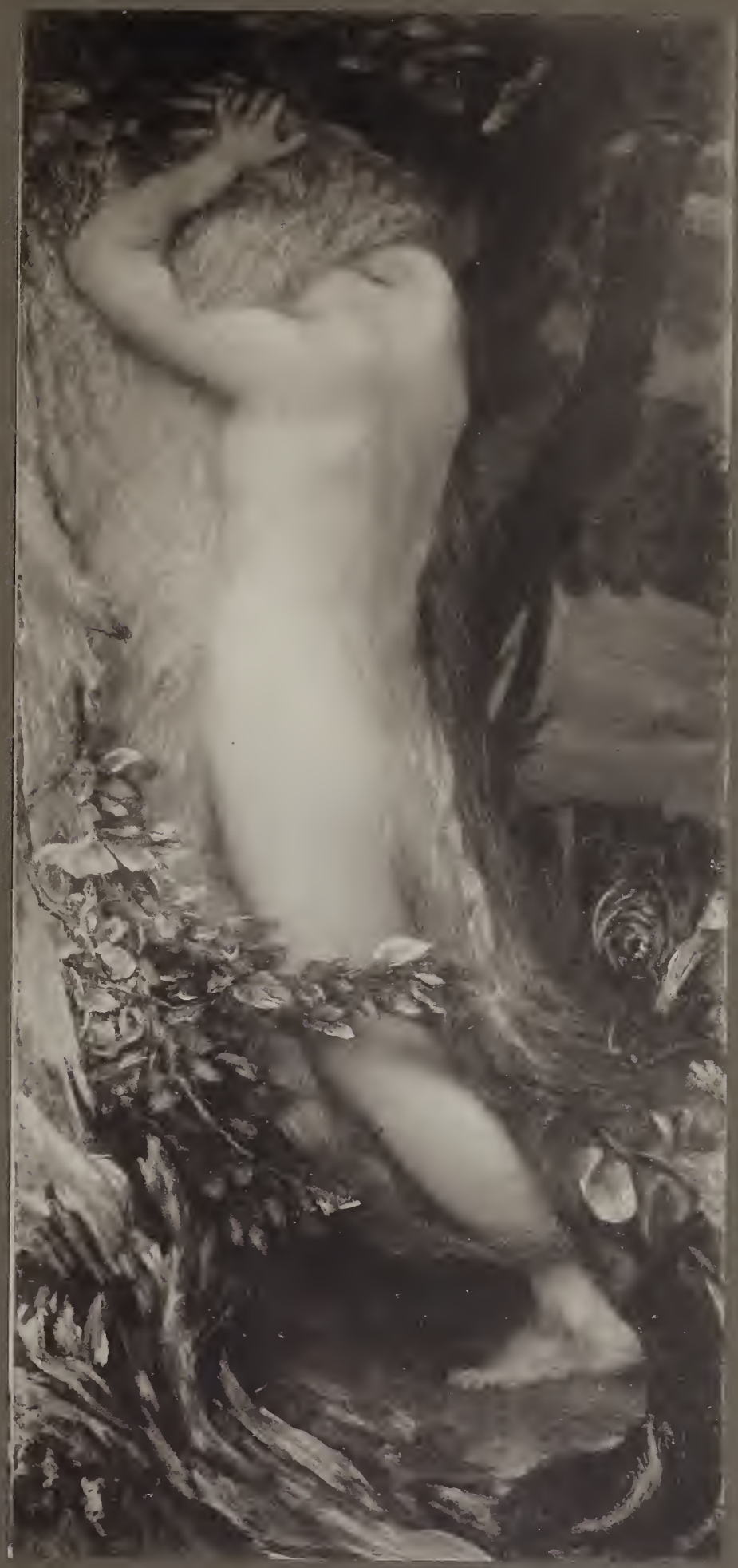


# EVE REPENTANT

LIONEL JOHNSON

# EVE REPENTANT

THE dew of tears is on her face,
Her wounded heart takes yet its fill
Of desolation and disgrace.
God still is God! And through God she
Foreknows her joy to be.



# SUMMER DAWN

William Morris

# SUMMER DAWN

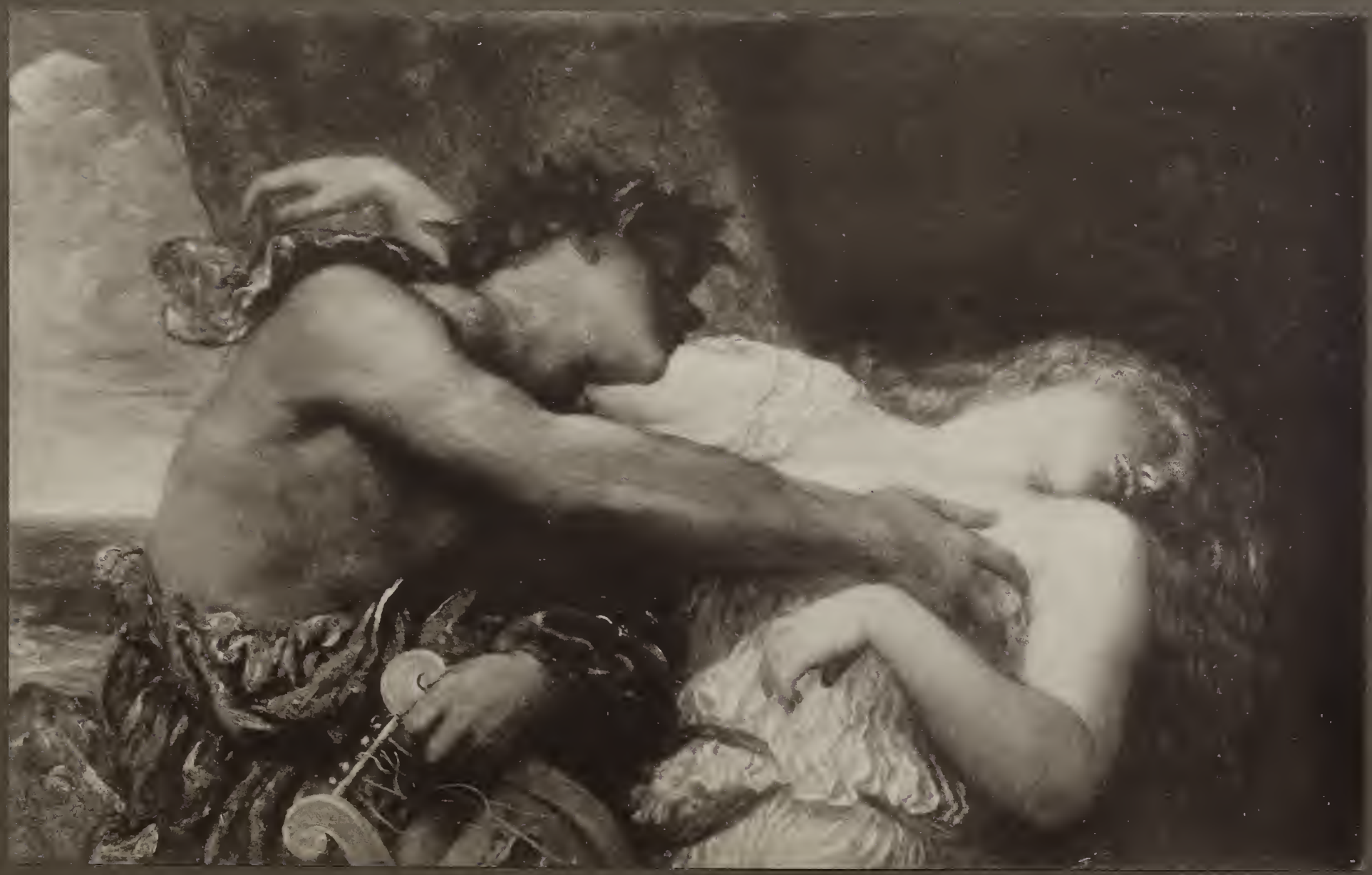
THE summer night waneth, the morning light slips
Faint and gray 'twixt the leaves of the aspen,
betwixt the cloud-bars,
That are patiently waiting there for the dawn:
Patient and colourless, though Heaven's gold
Waits to float through them along with the sun.
Far out in the meadows, above the young corn,
The heavy elms wait, and restless and cold
The uneasy wind rises; the roses are dun;
Through the long twilight they pray for the dawn.

# ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

Robert Browning

# ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

BUT give them me, the mouth, the eyes, the brow!
Let them once more absorb me! One look now
Will lap me round forever, not to pass
Out of its light, though darkness lie beyond:
Hold me but safe again within the bond
Of one immortal look! All woe that was,
Forgotten, and all terrors that may be,
Defied,—no past is mine, no future: look at me!

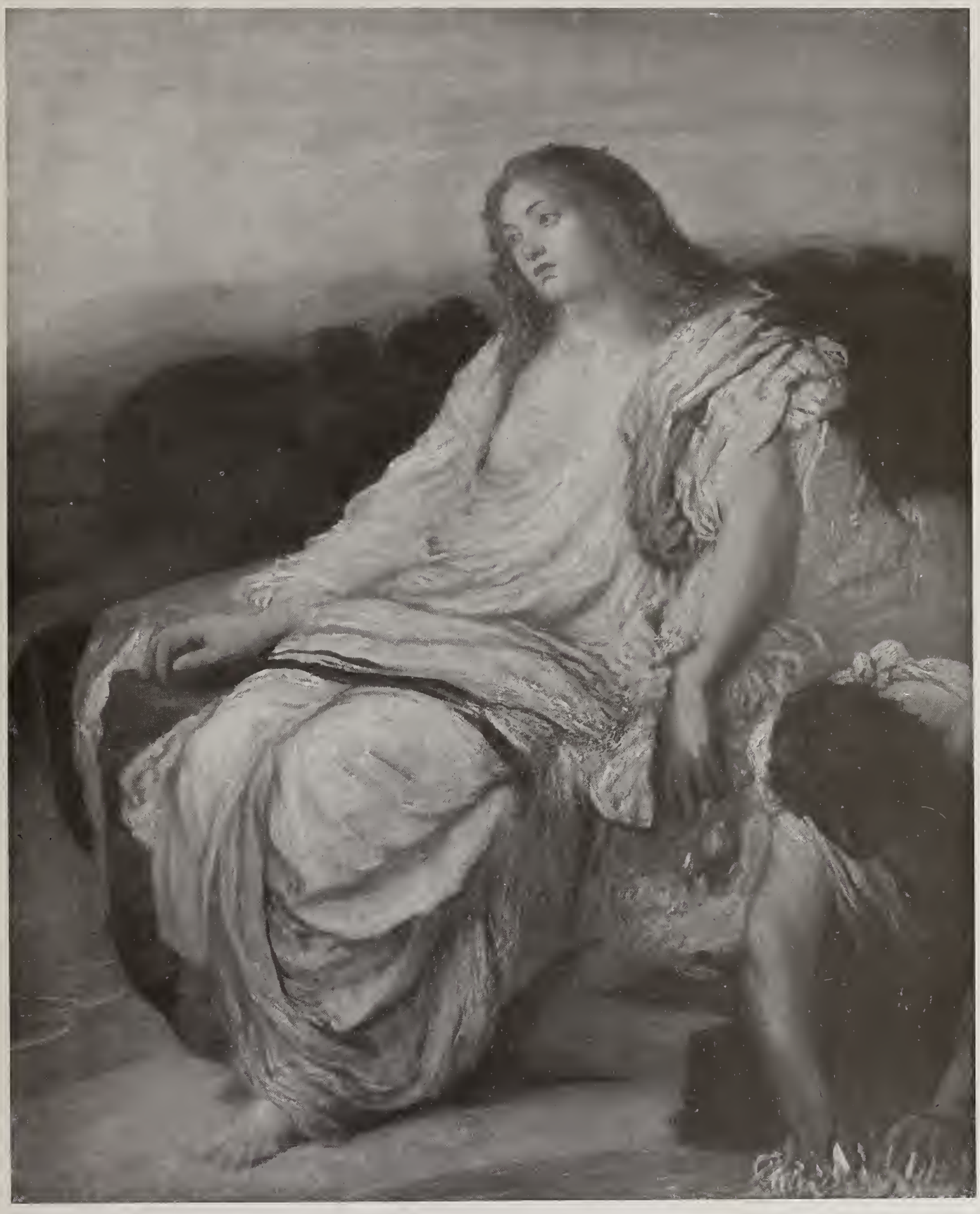


# ARIADNE

CHARLES LAMB

# ARIADNE

THE clouds are blackening, the storm threatening,
And even the forest maketh a moan;
Billows are breaking, the damsel's heart aching,
Thus by herself she singeth alone
Weeping right plenteously.
The world is empty, the heart is dead surely,
In this world plainly all seemeth amiss.



# LITTLE RED RIDING-HOOD

*Old Myth*

# LITTLE RED RIDING-HOOD

THE story of Red Riding-Hood who was swallowed with her Grandmother by the wolf, till they came out safe and sound when the hunter cut open the sleeping beast, is a myth that has different versions, such as Jonah and the whale in the Bible, and Tom Thumb "who was swallowed by the cow and came out unhurt," and the kindred Russian story of Vasilissa the Beautiful. All these refer to the alternate swallowing and casting forth of Day by Night, which is often figured as a wolf or sea-monster.

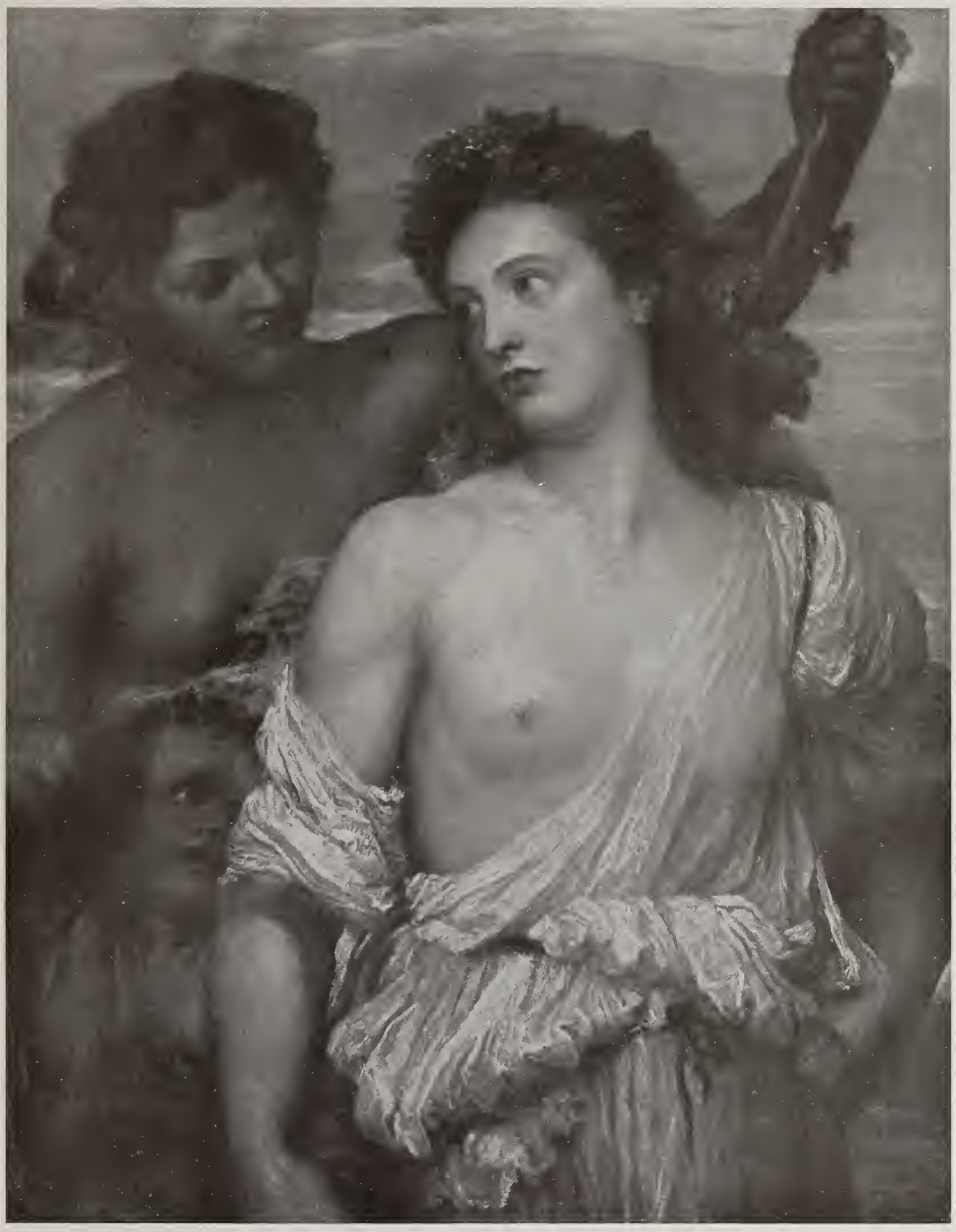
# A BACCHANAL

John Keats

# A BACCHANAL

"WHENCE came ye, merry Damsels? Whence came ye?
So many, and so many, and such glee?
Why have ye left your bowers desolate,
Your lutes, and gentler fate?—
'We follow Bacchus! Bacchus on the wing,
A conquering!
Bacchus, young Bacchus! good or ill betide,
We dance before him thorough kingdoms wide:—
Come hither, lady fair, and joinèd be
To our wild minstrelsy!'

"Whence came ye, jolly Satyrs? Whence came ye?
So many, and so many, and such glee?
Why have ye left your forest haunts, why left
Your nuts in oak-tree cleft?—
'For wine, for wine we left our kernel tree;
For wine we left our heath, and yellow brooms,
And cold mushrooms;
For wine we follow Bacchus through the earth;
Great God of breathless cups and chirping mirth!—
Come hither, lady fair, and joinèd be
To our mad minstrelsy!'"



# SIR GALAHAD

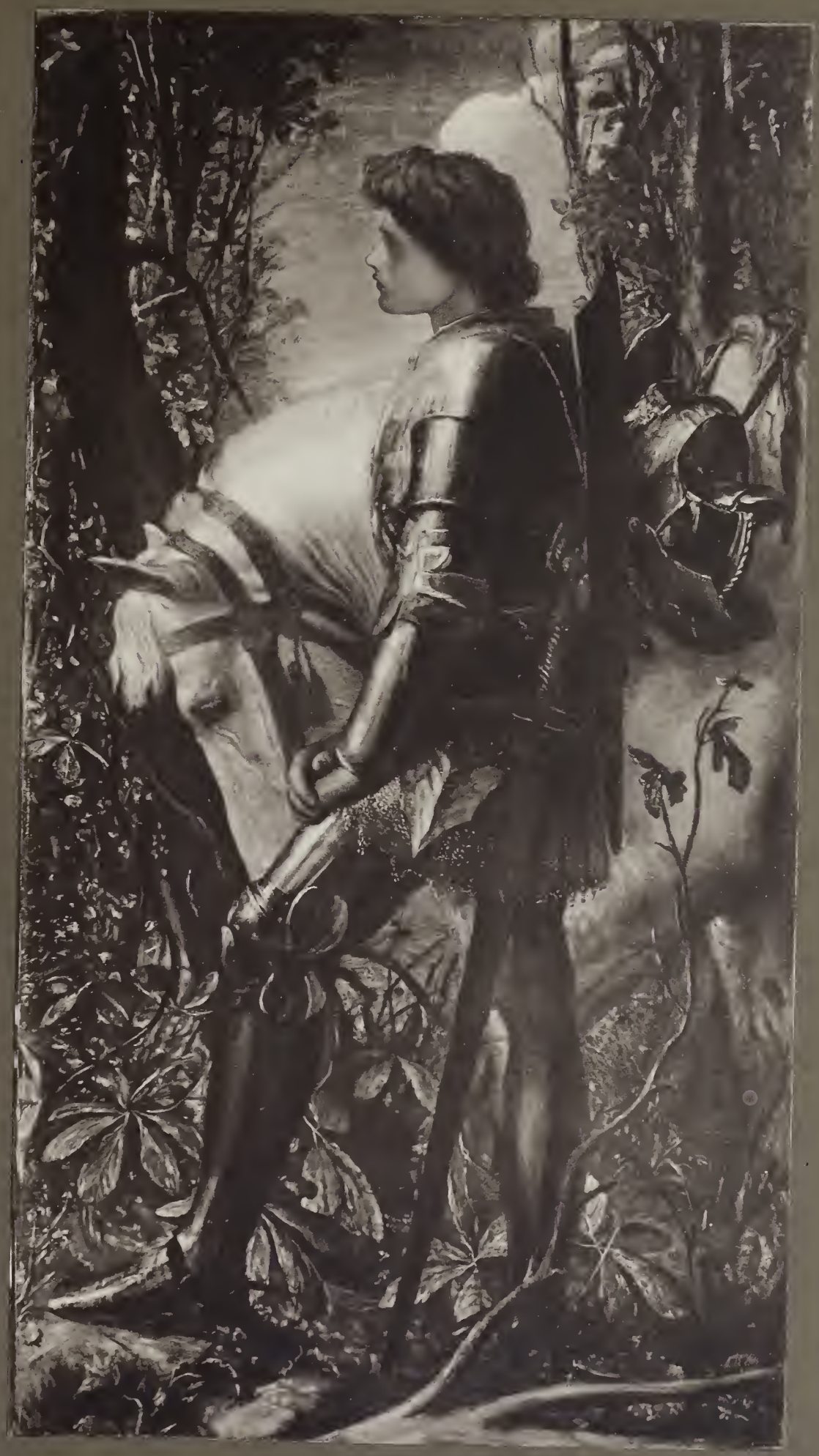
TENNYSON

# SIR GALAHAD

MY good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
The hard brands shiver on the steel,
The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
The horse and rider reel;
They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
And when the tide of combat stands,
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
On whom their favours fall!
For them I battle till the end,
To save from shame and thrall;
But all my heart is drawn above,
My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine;
I never felt the kiss of love,
Nor maiden's hand in mine.
More bounteous aspects on me beam,
Me mightier transports move and thrill;
So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
A virgin heart in work and will.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
And thro' the mountain-walls
A rolling organ-harmony
Swells up and shakes and falls.
Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
"O just and faithful knight of God!
Ride on! the prize is near."
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the Holy Grail.

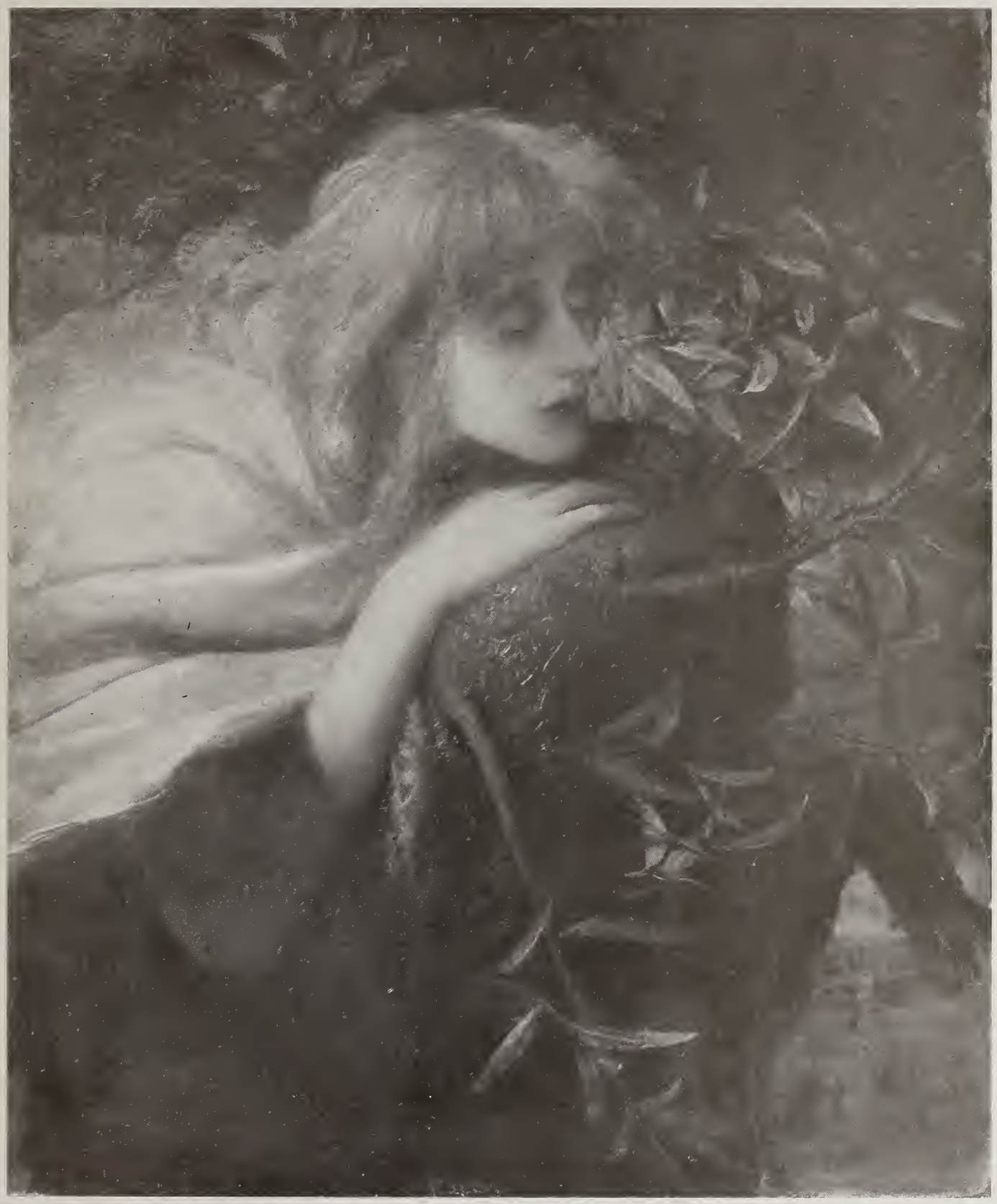


# OPHELIA

SHAKESPEARE

# OPHELIA

THERE is a willow grows aslant the brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
Therewith fantastic garlands did she make
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples.
There on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
When down her weedy trophies, and herself,
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide;
And, mermaid-like, a while they bore her up:
Which time, she chanted snatches of old tunes;
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indu'd
Unto that element: but longer could not be,
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.



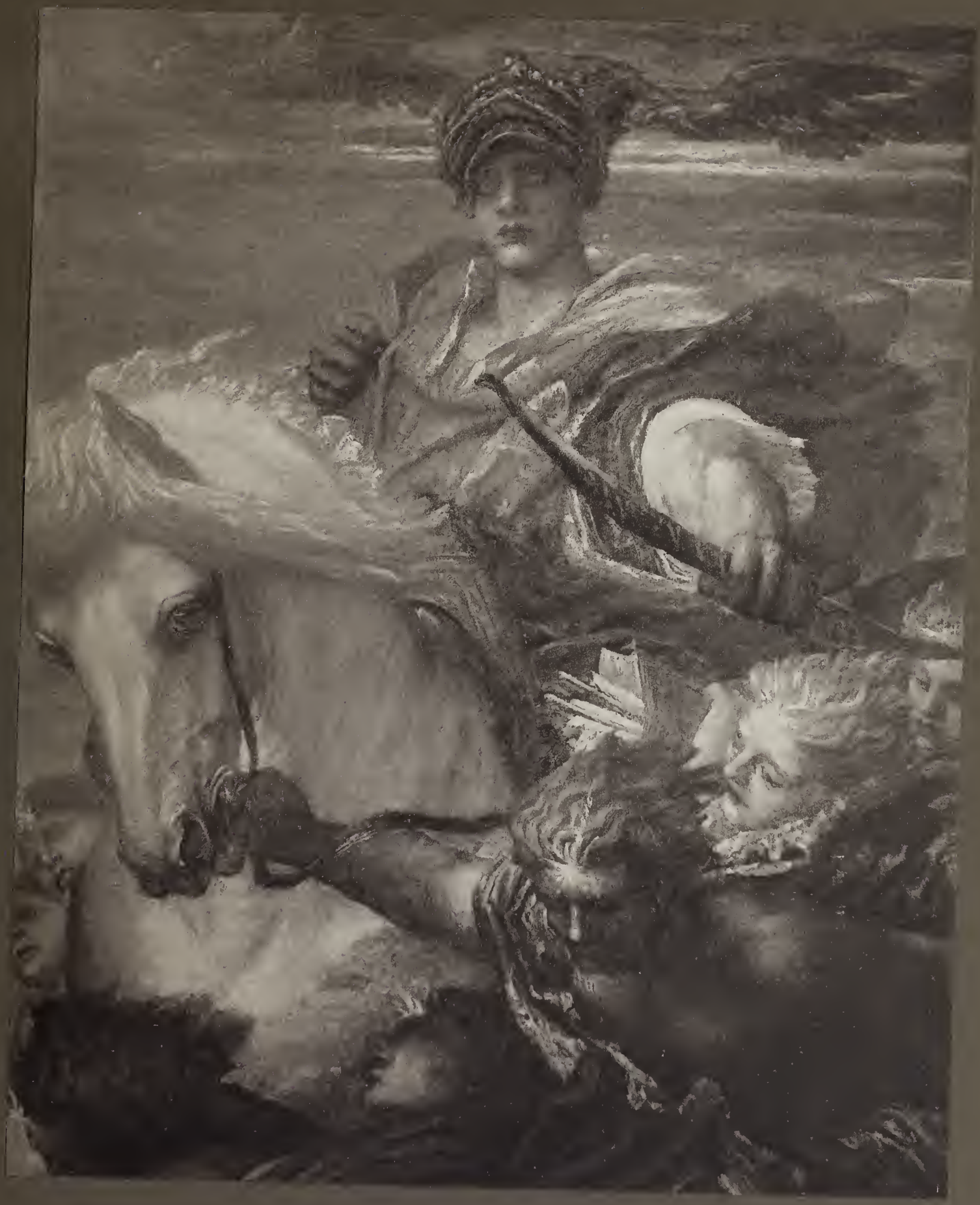
# THE RIDER ON THE WHITE HORSE

*Revelations*

# THE RIDER ON THE WHITE HORSE

AND I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, "Come and see."

And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.



# DEATH CROWNING INNOCENCE

WHITMAN

# DEATH CROWNING INNOCENCE

AT the last tenderly,
From the walls of the powerful fortress'd house,

* * * * * * * * * *

Let me glide noiselessly forth;
With the key of softness unlock the locks—with
a whisper,
Set ope the doors, O soul.

Tenderly—be not impatient,
(Strong is your hold, O mortal flesh,
Strong is your hold, O love.)

# PAOLO AND FRANCESCA

DANTE

(Charles Eliot Norton's Translation)

# PAOLO AND FRANCESCA

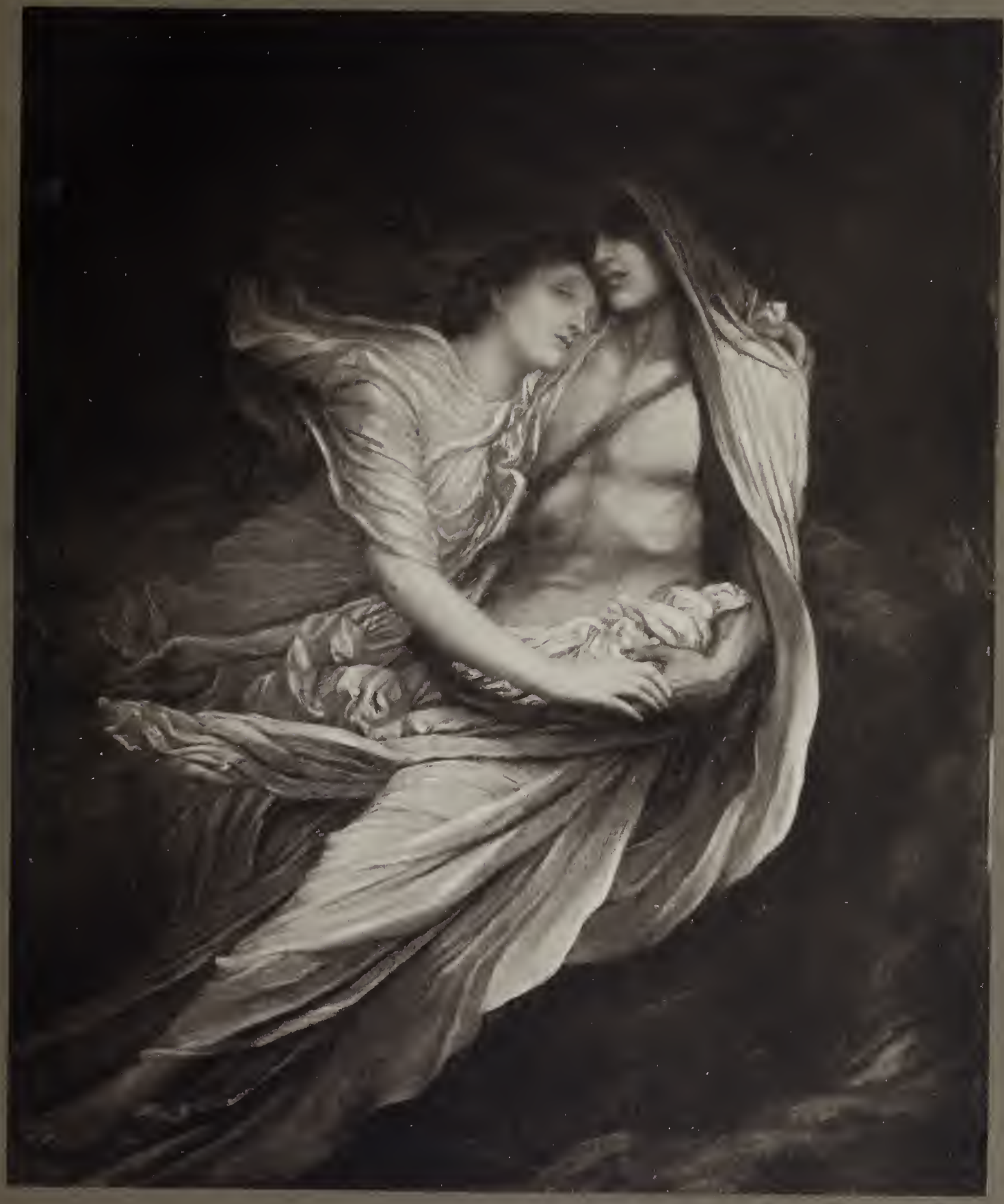
AFTER I had heard my Teacher name the dames of eld and the cavaliers, pity overcame me, and I was well-nigh bewildered. I began: "Poet, willingly would I speak with those two that go together, and seem to be so light upon the wind." And he to me: "Thou shalt see when they are nearer to us, and do thou then pray them by that love which leads them, and they will come." Soon as the wind sways them toward us, I lifted up my voice: "O wearied souls, come to speak with us, if Another deny it not."

As doves, called by desire, with wings open and steady, come through the air borne by their will to their sweet nest, these issued from the troop where Dido is, coming to us through the malign air, so strong was the compassionate cry.

"O living creature, gracious and benign, that goest through the black air visiting us who stained the world blood-red, if the King of the universe were a friend we would pray Him for thy peace, since thou hast pity on our perverse ill. Of what it pleases thee to hear, and what to speak, we will hear and we will speak to you, while the wind, as now, is hushed for us. The city where I was born sits upon the sea-shore, where the Po, with his followers, descends to have peace. Love, which quickly lays hold on gentle heart, seized this one for the fair person that was taken from me, and the mode still hurts me. Love, which absolves no loved one from loving, seized me for the pleasing of him so strongly that, as thou seest, it does not even now abandon me. Love brought us to one death. Cain awaits him who quenched our life." These words were borne to us from them.

"We were reading one day, for delight, of Lancelot, how love constrained him. We were alone and without any suspicion. Many times that reading urged our eyes, and took the color from our faces, but only one point was it that overcame us. When we read of the longed-for smile being kissed by such a lover, this one, who never shall be divided from me, kissed my mouth all trembling. Gallehaut was the book, and he who wrote it. That day we read no farther in it."

While the one spirit said this, the other was so weeping that through pity I swooned as if I had been dying, and fell as a dead body falls.



# "FOR HE HAD GREAT POSSESSIONS"

St. Mark

# "FOR HE HAD GREAT POSSESSIONS"

AND when He had gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to Him, and asked Him, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

And Jesus said unto him, "Why callest thou Me good? There is none good but one, that is, God."

Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow Me."

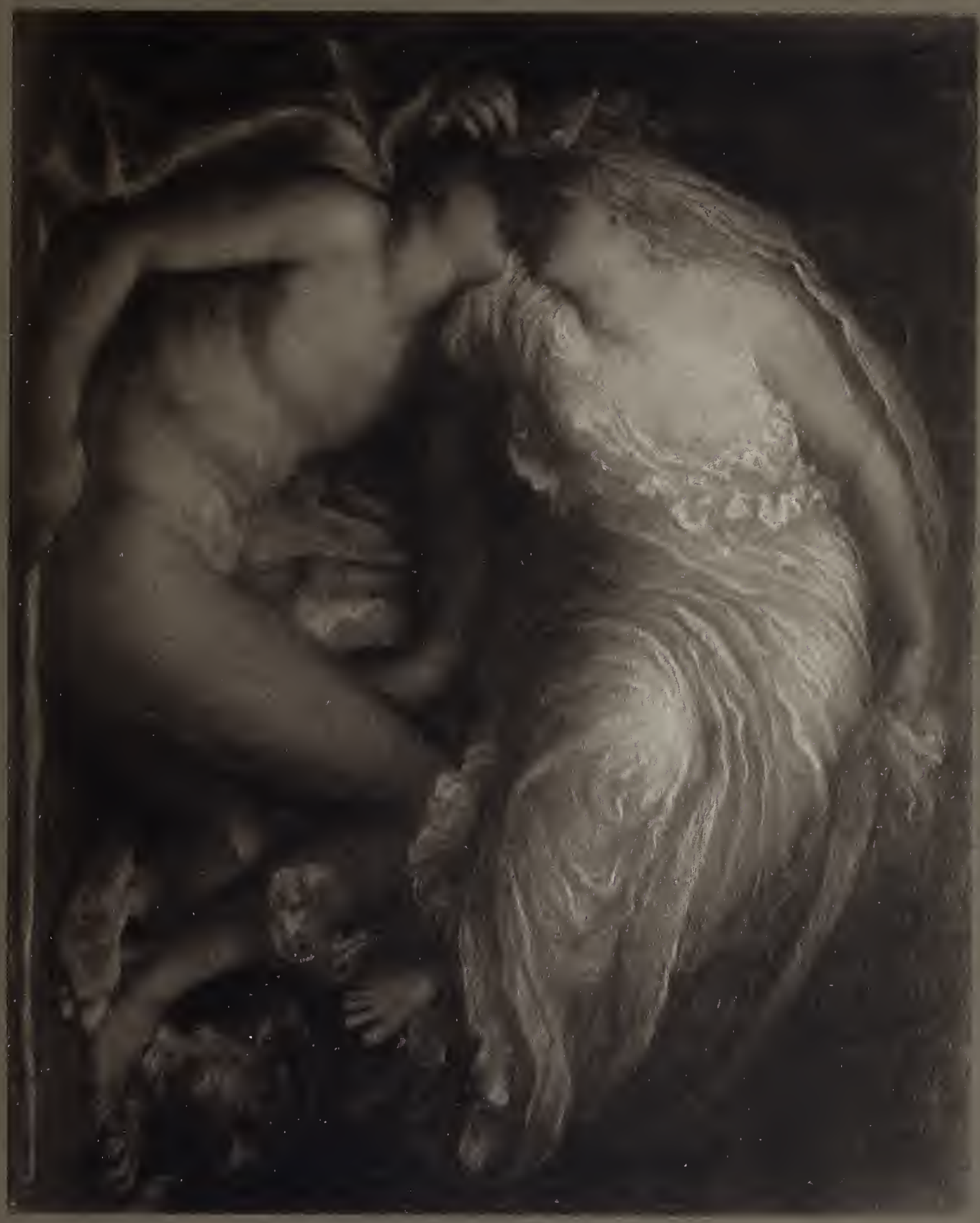
And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

# DIANA AND ENDYMION

FLETCHER

# DIANA AND ENDYMION

"How the pale Phœbe, hunting in a grove,
First saw the boy Endymion, from whose eyes
She took eternal fire that never dies;
How she conveyed him softly in a sleep,
His temples bound with poppy, to the steep
Head of old Latmos, where she stoops each night,
Gilding the mountains with her brother's light,
To kiss her sweetest."



# DAPHNE

K. Vernon

# DAPHNE

STILL is the noon, the forest holds its breath,
These immemorial oaks and beeches wait
The druid wind which comes to consecrate
Their voices to its runes of life and death.

Quiet is over all, its song the linnet stays;
Yet where the wooded aisle ends in the glade
And passing clouds drop gifts of sun and shade
Upon the grass, a faery birch tree sways.

We say "a tree,"—but should a poet look
Upon this miracle of rhythmic grace,
Perchance he'd know the shining limbs and face
Of Daphne mirrored in the adoring brook.